

The following are copies of emails sent to the President's Council on Bioethics in order to be considered part of the "written testimony" record for our September 11-12, 2008, meeting.

Sept. 12, 2008

I recently received an email that new legislation may be put into affect that would directly impact my pro-life values as well as the values of our pro-life doctors. It is not fair to require doctors of faith and moral conscience to do things that go against their moral/religious beliefs. We have a right to pro-life doctors.

The pro-choice agenda's main argument is that everyone has a right to chose what happens to their bodies. Why should there be a double standard for those following their moral and religious teachings? We have a right to doctors that will not compromise our beliefs on abortion, contraception, IVF, et cetera.

Please consider what I and other pro-lifers have said. Let's work to keep this country free for all, as this is in accordance with the pro-choice agenda.

God Bless!

Jill Syrigos

Sept. 11, 2008

Please protect the right of conscience for health care providers. Medical professionals need to have the right to deny services that go against their beliefs. The President's Council on Bioethics should protect their rights.

--

Ernest Fernandez

Sept. 10, 2008

I am emailing to voice my opinion that American OB/GYN's should be able to practice without performing abortions and or administering the "overnight pill. Please fight for the freedom to allow the MD's and their patients to have the choice to choose what they believe is morally right.

Thank you,

Wendy Kiser

Louisville, KY

I am writing The President's Council on Bioethics in regards to the recent opinion on The Limits of Conscientious Refusal in Medicine. This opinion states that all OBGYN's must refer clients for abortions as well as perform abortions even if the OBGYN has a personal conviction/core value that abortion is, in fact, taking a life. America's founding fathers clearly intended that freedom of conscience to determine such choices as these remains within the realm of personal liberty. As an American, I value having Pro-Life OBGYN's in practice. It provides viable options for women who otherwise would perhaps not realize there are other choices besides abortion. Ironically, in this age where 'Pro-Choice' means allowing one to choose, this opinion to dictate moral decisions of all OBGYNs on the specific practice of abortion betrays an inclination bordering on dictatorship indicating some would impose that abortion be a standard operating period procedure, a matter of business as usual if you please, leaving no other options on the table (no pun intended). I, for one, would be sad to see such a mentality be the 'guiding light' of medical practice. It betrays the Hippocratic oath and the very idea of civilization.

Respectfully submitted,

Lorie Foucault

Please preserve the right of health care providers to follow their conscience in not performing services or not making referrals for services for such things as abortions or artificial insemination, in vitro fertilization, and emergency contraception.

If health care providers are required to perform or refer to services which violate their consciences, many will leave the health care profession. I want to be able to choose a doctor whose values I trust.

Sincerely,
Constance Downing
Kodiak, AK

Sept. 9, 2008

Everyone in this country deserves to have reliable health care...this includes those of us who place a high value on life.

When I go in to get ob care I want a doctor that will value and fight for my child's life as much as I do. That child is NOT a replaceable commodity! When I take my parents and my grandparents in for care I want a doctor that will genuinely help them, not just some doctor that will ignore their health issues and prescribe something just to "get them by" until they die, or even worse when they become critically ill completely refuse them basic care so they do die! Doctors who will do their best to care for each of us as babies, children, handicapped, and elderly, because we are a human life, not because the doctor or some insurance company has determined that our life is worth living. Any physician that performs abortions and/or euthanasia has proven that he or she does NOT place a high value on human life. He or she has proven that they cannot be considered reliable or trustworthy in anyway. When anyone in our family or our extended family needs health care, we need to be able to trust the physician and care providers that we have placed in care of our love ones.

We need and have a right to doctors and other health care providers we know place a high value human life!

Doctors, health care clinics and hospitals, pharmacist, and other medical personnel must be allowed to conscientiously refuse to perform, prescribe, or refer patients to treatments that they cannot morally or ethically recommend for them. That is the only way we can ensure the availability of reliable, trustworthy health care for everyone not only at the present time, but especially in the future as society in general continues to devalue and put a price tag on human life. Please help us by protecting their vitally important right to conscientiously refuse when morally and ethically needed.

Sincerely,
Christina Farrier

Please protect the health care providers whose consciences dictate respect for the life of the unborn.

Thank you
Catherine

Please protect the conscience of health care providers, particularly in supporting life.

George Maloof, M.D.

Allow medical professionals right to conscience!

Sheryl O'Neal
Citizen/ I vote!
Johns Island, SC

Please know that we need our Catholic doctors. Please do not force them to perform abortions against their conscience and please don't force pharmacists to fill prescriptions for morning after pills and contraceptives against their moral compass. There are other doctors and pharmacists that are willing to take up the slack.

Thank you, and God bless you,
Rava Graves

Please hold a position of respect and complete protection for life, born and unborn, old and young, in your work in Bioethics.

There is only one Creator: The Lord God Almighty, and we -- His creations - have made it clear that He and only He is to give life and take it away. I believe this also means that we are not to tamper with creation in any way whatsoever.

Thank you for your support in this critical area.

Sincerely,

Duval B. Acker
Mt. Pleasant, SC

Just a quick note to urge you to make available to all of us in the USA health care providers that are: Traditional Catholics, Evangelical Protestants, Pro-Life and/or other doctors of faith (in God) to care for us in the fields of Ob/Gyn, Family Practice and Geriatrics. This is extremely important to all citizens in the USA.

Respectfully submitted,

Shawn Dady

I am emailing with regard to the right of conscience for health care providers. Medical professionals should have the right to deny services that go against their beliefs. Please take this into consideration!

Sincerely,

Joan Vitalo

I support the right of conscience for health care providers. Medical professionals should not have to provide services that are against their beliefs.

Sincerely,

Mary Alice Truesdale
Hanahan, South Carolina

On behalf of all of the members of the NJ Natural Family Planning Assoc, Inc., I respectfully forward our strong endorsement in support of the right of conscience for healthcare providers and medical professionals.

Providing excellent healthcare is intimately connected with a provider's *belief* that they are indeed providing excellent healthcare. The freedom for our medical professionals to discern, select, and provide the best care for the best patient outcomes is fundamental to our system - the best medical care system in the world.

The right of a doctor or nurse to practice in accord with their beliefs is inseparable from their desire to provide patients with the best possible outcome. I trust a doctor or nurse with this integrity. I simply cannot trust a doctor or nurse who I know can practice medicine against their beliefs.

Please protect our medical professionals right of conscience clause.

Thank you for your work in protecting this fundamental freedom.

Please support our NJNFP mission,
Damon

Damon C. Owens, President
New Jersey Natural Family Planning (NJNFP)
P.O. Box 510, West Orange, NJ 07052
(973) 847-0165 office (815) 366-8235 fax
info@njnfp.org www.njnfp.org

NJNFP is a non-profit, tax-exempt charitable organization recognized under Internal Revenue Code section 501(c)(3). Our mission is to advance cultural awareness of natural family planning and the important role it plays in healthy and effective fertility management. Please visit us at www.njnfp.org and consider a tax-deductible donation in support of our mission.

I am writing as a private citizen and as a clinical psychologist to voice my opinion that medical professionals should have the absolute right to deny providing medical services that go against their moral beliefs. To do otherwise is to impose the values of the government on medical professionals. There is no reason to believe that the health care system would fall down if this were allowed. It would, however, ensure that individuals with a wide variety of values feel comfortable entering into the medical profession.

Sincerely,

Susan Styles, Ph.D.
Licensed Clinical Psychologist, SC

With a due respect for the office you hold. We must maintain separation of church and state. The government should not be allowed to step in and legislate the ethics of medical professionals.

A medical professional should never be made to go against their own ethics.

To do so would not only be political suicide but, we would lose many more people in this wonderful field.

To tell you the truth, the thought of it is positively frightening. It is a slippery slope and the only way is down.

To some degree this has already happened. It is already in some of the guidelines for Medicare. You don't know how many times I have heard medical professionals say that a patient needed to stay longer in the hospital but, were sent home because their "days" for that particular illness were numbered and they did not have a long enough stay to go to a skilled care center from the hospital. This happened to my mother.

We need checks and balances within our systems. We need to have those who are an advocate for the patient. Those advocates are medical personnel with knowledge of the patient as an individual and direct access to patient records.

There is enough working against patients and impairing their right to physical support and nutrition while they die. Simply dying at home is not an option for some.

We fight insurance companies every time we have a procedure. As it is, they decide what we can and cannot have in the way of care. They are in control of patient care, hospitalization and what medications we can have.

We need to also consider the culling of embryos and the use of their stem cells. Stem cell embryos have been known for a long time now not to produce the desired effects of healing.
<http://www.catholicweekly.com.au/02/aug/25/02.html>.

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/15385500/>

<http://web.mit.edu/newsoffice/2003/sherley.html>

They have caused cancer in patients. Read Isaac Asimov's theory of decay. No one should be made to cull embryos or harvest embryonic stem cells.

No one should be made to perform an abortion.

No druggist should be made to sell products which they consider against their ethics.

All medical professionals should have a chance to "opt out" of certain procedures and decisions, which go against their ethics, and philosophies without out loss of income or tenure. We need to make certain that we understand our strength is in our diversity and do our best to prevent totalitarianism from ever taking a foothold in our medical system.

Laura Clements
Phil and Carolyn Reuther
Daniel Island, SC

I urge you to support the Rights of Conscience of Pharmacists and other Health Care Workers.

I do not look on abortion as a right. I believe that abortion, euthanasia, and physician assisted suicide each to be murder!

It is a basic American Freedom that people cannot have their freedoms of speech and religion dictated by the government. Why then should a person in the healthcare profession, be forced to distribute or administer drugs which go against their conscience. Why should they be forced to distribute drugs which would cause the death, of an unborn child, a person who is kept on a ventilator or fed through a tube, or a person who does not want to face a natural death. To force a pharmacist, doctor, nurse or any other health practitioner to conduct any of these, further causes them to be complicit in the murder of the individual, and that is just plain wrong. Especially in the case of a person who is in medical training and forced to perform or observe abortions.

When I was growing up the first thing I learned about the medical profession was that they swore an oath to do no harm. Abortion, Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide are all harmful, they end a human's life.

Very respectfully,
Timothy J. Kenefick

As you meet this week to discuss a serious topic concerning medical professionals, I want to make my voice heard on the subject. Medical professionals need to have the right to deny services that go against their beliefs. What freedom of religion do we have if we are forced to do things that explicitly cause us to do sinful actions against the very core of our beliefs?! A person should be able to seek a livelihood in a healthcare field without fear that they will have to comply with morally evil deeds. The oath "First do no harm" means nothing if we are forced to comply with a "dis-service" by lowering our Christian standard to meet the "wants" of all. Please fight for our freedom to uphold our faith and high standards to provide excellent healthcare.

Please make our voices heard!!!

Kindest regards,

Bebe Norris
Greer, South Carolina

This email is in support of Health Care Providers given the right to DENY SERVICES THAT GO AGAINST THEIR BELIEFS. Thank you.

Patricia Vitkovic

Doctors and other Health Care providers should not be forced to forego their deeply held moral convictions in exchange for the privilege of continuing their career. Those advocating "pro-choice" are only for "choice" if it involves supporting abortion on demand.

I am a member of ACOG and was deeply disturbed by their Committee Opinion limiting conscience rights and suggesting that it is unethical to maintain moral convictions against patient demand.

I am pro-life and I will not prescribe any medication or perform any procedure that will interfere with life from conception onward. And yes, this includes birth control pills and IUD's. For years, ACOG has changed the definition of pregnancy to one that only begins after implantation. By doing so, medications that can destroy life from the time of conception to implantation (birth control pills, IUD's, morning after pill, Depo-Provera) are no longer abortifacients but contraceptives. Now that this Provider Conscience Regulation has come up, ACOG was forced to admit that these agents can be both abortifacient and contraceptive. TRUTH IS TRUTH.

I will continue to practice the truth no matter what because the gifts that I have to practice come from God and I will not violate the commandment to "DO NOT KILL."

While my colleagues do not share my opinions, they understand the importance of exercising one's rights of religion.

Women travel HOURS to see me because I am one of the few pro-life physicians in the area. I will not refer for or perform abortions, refer for or perform IVF, or prescribe contraceptives (see www.creightonmodel.com)

If the Provider Conscience Regulations are not in place, I am confident that ACOG will proceed with it's desire to rid the specialty of those not supporting abortion by limiting board certification.

Sincerely,
Inge Collins, M.D., FACOG, CFCMC
Kings Mountain, NC

Sept. 8, 2008

As the father of five boys, I am writing to urge the Bioethics board to require a conscience clause exemption for doctors. While doctors don't have the right to refuse *treatment*, some modern medical procedures (IVF, abortion, cloning, among others) present serious moral problems for

many doctors -- in fact, the medical profession would have, as a whole, found these procedures utterly repugnant, and would shudder that they should be mandatory.

We train our doctors to make judgment calls all the time. If in their medical and ethical judgments they can not perform a procedure, isn't it a bit silly, not to mention a violation of common sense and, I hope, medical ethics, to require them to perform it?

Try these three examples for comparison. Would it have been ethical for doctors to refuse to participate in the Tuskegee syphilis experiments? Of course it would. Was it moral, ethical or common sense if any doctor were compelled to take part? I trust that the answer is no. Doctors in some parts of Asia sometimes perform "female circumcision" -- a barbaric procedure. Is it right for medical boards or governments to compel the doctors to do this? Is it meritorious for doctors to refuse to cooperate? Should doctors have collaborated with Joseph Mengele in the mistreatment of Jews?

Chris Garton-Zavesky

As you meet this week to discuss a serious topic concerning medical professionals, I want to make my voice heard on the subject. Medical professionals need to have the right to deny services that go against their beliefs. What freedom of religion do we have if we are forced to do things that explicitly cause us to do sinful actions. A person should be able to seek a livelihood in a healthcare field without fear that they will have to comply with morally evil deeds. The oath "First do no harm" means nothing if we are forced to comply with a "dis-service" by lowering our Christian standard to meet the "wants" of all. Why is it ok to tear down Christian beliefs but not touch a Muslims beliefs. Please fight for our freedom to uphold our faith and high standards to provide excellent healthcare.

Sincerely,
Lisa McMahan

Religious and moral beliefs of all individuals, most especially health care workers should be protected at all costs. Christian employees in healthcare cannot be forced or otherwise coerced into aiding or abetting any patient who wishes to secure an abortion or sterilization. Both are grievous sins in Catholic church teaching and Catholic healthcare workers cannot ethically be forced to participate in practices that are diametrically opposed to their beliefs.

The healthcare workers' vow to first do no harm is woven into the fiber of their being. And Catholic church teaching is that such acts (abortion and sterilization) are intrinsically evil.

Please pass this message along to whomever will be participating in the hearing on the right of conscience for healthcare providers.

Thank you.

Mary Pat Arostegui
Matthews NC

We have inalienable rights and the right to liberty and the pursuit of happiness both imply the use of conscience. Please respect that right.

John E. Reagan

One of the basic characteristics of a human is that a person has a conscience. It is a God-given guide and a right the government cannot take away or treat lightly.

Sincerely, Barbara Reagan, a voting American who has paid her dues in more ways than one.

In your important hearing on the right of conscience for health care providers this Friday, I strongly want medical professionals to have the right to deny services that go against their beliefs. It is important in a free country.

Thank you.

William Chimiak, Ph.D.
Greenbelt, MD

Dear Bioethics Committee,
(and I do hold you 'dear' as you are dedicated to a work we all need accomplished for the sake of humanity)

I received an Email from my friends Sue & Dale Rodwick regarding the ACOG's scandalous attempt to take this country one more step toward the black hole of oblivion. As I read their Email and downloaded the ACOG's document and read it, terrible scenes of the 'evil' that darkened Earth during the entire Twentieth Century flooded my mind: hatred, violence, war, starvation, torture, oppression, and depravity on every continent, against peoples of every race and religious belief, committed by people of every race and religious belief. We like to point our finger at individuals like Franco, Hitler, Stalin, Mao, Castro, Pol Pot, Amin, Hussein, but behind everyone of them was a party of supporters. People may laugh at my comments which seem alarming and radical, but watch your step... the signs say, 'Slippery Slope!' Perhaps the megalomaniac personalities that I named above did surpass the intentions of their supporters, but once they gained total power... all hell broke loose. However, these evil men did not just surface mysteriously and take over. They rose up upon the shoulders of people who listened to their evil rhetoric and held the same beliefs.

Evil men and women will promise anything to gain power, and most often it involves riding the wave of change and the overthrowing of traditional beliefs and values. What has been happening in the United States since the 'coming of age' of the Baby Boomer generation (to which I belong) has been non-stop, full scale Revolution. It has been so invasive and diffused throughout society that it has been more like a smoldering blanket, than a wildfire blaze. The result has been a desensitizing of the older vanguard generation and a brainwashing of the upcoming latest adult generation. Who is to blame? How did it happen? It is too complex to answer and we haven't the time to analyze it. It is like a many headed monster with far reaching tentacles, that has picked up the great land that was America after WWII, ripping it off its base, shaking its foundations and turning it upside down. The monster is the enemy of Freedom, the opponent of Truth and the destroyer of Life. We can't run away in fear; it won't help to bury our heads and hope it will go away; and worst of all, we must not be convinced that it doesn't exist. Therefore, we must stand our ground and fight. We must confront the evil monster wherever it shows itself. It has shown itself to be clearly present in the document written by the ACOG, 'The Limits on Conscientious Refusal in Medicine.' If it gets to the Bill stage in Congress, it will be time for a Filibuster. It may take an all out campaign in the media through advertisements, day and night, no matter the cost of the battle. We'll need Pro-life 'Generals' with Big Guns and even Bigger Wallets to lead the charge!..... OR We can do all that is possible to see that the Democrats do not win the White House on November 4, 2008
!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

That's my opinion,
Suzanne Malavasic

Just a quick opinion.

While a doctor needs to administer to save a life regardless of his beliefs, I firmly believe he does not have to sacrifice his moral principles in the case of elective procedures. The constitution guarantees this. If a doctor or pharmacist doesn't want to provide a service that he believes is immoral, he doesn't have to do it. God knows that there are enough low moral MD's and Pharm. that will do it as long as it pays. Good doctors are hard to find. Please don't chase them away with this new regulation.

Thank You
Stan Sleeman

I want medical professionals to have the right to deny services that go against their beliefs.

thank you.

Colleen [Loiselle]

Planned Parenthood has political clout way out of proportion to the number of Americans who share their views. The majority of Americans, who love this country because of the freedom it gives them to follow their consciences, are too busy to spend their lives lobbying.

That's why we need you to stand up for conscience laws. You've been identified as worthy of this responsibility for your strong judgement, willingness to fight for what is right, and to represent all those Americans w/o the time to lobby.

I hope you will do all that is necessary to protect doctors' freedom of conscience.

Sincerely,

Matt Bowman
Managing Editor, AlwaysOn Network

September 8th, 2008

Kyle Beiter, MD
6901 Mercy Road
Omaha, NE 68106
402-390-6600

The President's Council on Bioethics
Edmund D. Pellegrino, MD Chair
Diane M. Gianelli, Director of Communications

1425 New York Avenue, NW
Suite C100
Washington, DC 20005

Council Members,

I am a gynecologist who neither provides nor refers for elective abortions. As you may know, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists recently published their Committee Opinion #385 regarding "The Limits of Conscientious Refusal in Reproductive Medicine". In it, they basically seek to establish abortion, sterilization, and contraception as the standard of care for health care providers. This could prevent those providers who do not provide or refer for these services from attaining board certification, hospital privileges, and insurance reimbursements.

I want you to know that I recently wrote a letter to ACOG asking them to rescind Committee Opinion #385. When I asked others if they wanted to cosign the letter, the response was overwhelming. Over 800 people have responded to date, many of them physicians, nurses, medical students, and pharmacists. Many women also responded, indicating that they desire medical professionals who respect life.

I have copied the letter and the signatures below for you. Please support us in acting in accord with our consciences to provide women and families with life-affirming medical care.

Sincerely,
Kyle Beiter, MD
Omaha, NE

August 14, 2008

Kyle Beiter, MD
6901 Mercy Road
Omaha, NE 68106

American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
Dr. Douglas H. Kirkpatrick, President
409 12th St., S.W., PO Box 96920
Washington, D.C. 20090-6920

Dr. Kirkpatrick and the ACOG staff,

We represent a growing number of health professionals in women's health and laypeople who disagree strongly with the ACOG Committee Opinion #385. There are many among us, strongly committed to providing health care to women, who believe that elective abortion, sterilization, and contraception promote disrespect for women and children and destroy families. Your efforts to establish these services as the norm in women's health care will reduce women's access to providers who support their well-being and that of their families in ways that pro-abortion providers cannot.

We ask you to rescind this opinion immediately.

Sincerely,

Kyle Beiter, MD Omaha, NE

William Chavira, MD, Fellow, American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
Phoenix, AZ

Michael S. Parker, MD, Fellow, American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
Gahanna, OH

Stephen Pavela, MD La Crosse, WI

William V. Williams, MD Havertown, PA

James J. Schuh, MD Iowa City, IA

Samuel F. Castillo, MD Phoenix, AZ

Maralee C. Bowers, MD Hinsdale, IL

Leonie S. Watson, MD Mountainside, NJ

Richard J. Petersen, MD Tempe, AZ

Robert C. Pivonka, MD

Dominic M. Pedulla, MD, FACC Oklahoma City, OK

Daniel Bejarano MD, MS, MS Eng. Dayton, OH

Betsy Liliana Cote de Bejarano MD, MPH Dayton, OH

Thomas Lutz, MD Grayslake, IL

Edwin T. Anselmi, MD

George Delgado, MD San Diego, CA

Cynthia Miley, MD Tucson, AZ

Carlos Vera, MD Denver, CO

Jesse Gorley, MD

Jennifer P. Althoff, MD Newton, IA

Stephen P. Billion, MD Sioux Falls, SD
 Diane Elmore, MD Scottsdale, AZ
 Armando D. Garza, MD San Antonio, TX
 Robert H. Bullington, Jr., MD Phoenix, AZ
 Aime L. Nuar, MD Manassas, VA
 James Franklin Wharam, MD Boston, MA
 Patrick Yeung, Jr., MD Durham, NC
 Amy Hogan, MD Great Bend, KS
 Larissa M. Meyer, MD Phoenix, AZ
 Theresa Stigen, MD Omaha, NE
 Leslie E. Wilson, MD Houston, TX
 Christine M. Zainer, MD Wauwatosa, WI
 David Born, MD Newark, OH
 Barbara Rose, RN, MSN, FCP Jenkintown, PA
 Laura Castillo, RN Phoenix, AZ
 Maria Jimenez, RN, BSN New York, NY
 Anne Hanley, RN, BSN, FCPI St. Louis, MO
 Cheryl Fonseca, RN Columbus, OH
 Kathryn Beiter, RN Lancaster, OH
 Alanna Wendy Sorauf, RN Mesa, AZ
 Ila A. Sowins-Dunmire, RN, OCN
 Terri Vyner, RN, M. Bioeth Aurora, CO
 Phyllis Amrick, CRNP Nazareth, PA
 Andrea R. Polito, RN, BSN Annandale, VA
 Mary E. Ho, RN, FCP Blairstown, NJ
 Lauren Turner, RN, BSN Lancaster, OH
 Mary Beth Pavela, RN Madison, WI
 Michelle D. Griffin, RN Newtown, PA
 Elizabeth Lynch, RN Ilion, NY
 Annie Surine, RN Baltimore, MD
 Gregory D. Holden, BS, RN Phoenix, AZ
 Christine O'Brien, RN Beverly, MA
 Elizabeth Turajski, RN Seattle, WA
 Denise Ferrell, RN, BSN
 Patricia Calascibett, RN Sun City, AZ
 Rev. Dennis R. Schuelkens, Jr., MA, MDiv, BSN, RN Wheeling, WV
 Elizabeth Turner, RN, BSN Wake Forest, NC
 Leah Getts, RN, BSN St. Louis, MO
 Batrice Adcock, BS, RN Charlotte, NC
 Sharon Page, RN
 Cynthia S. Bullington, RN, MS Phoenix, AZ
 Alicia Ruiz, RN, BSN Manassas, VA
 Carolyn Barta, MSN Columbia, MO
 Nancy Sandrock RNC, CNM, MSN Weslaco, TX
 Elizabeth Schleeter-Steier, CNM Paradise Valley, AZ
 Mary Hyland, RN Phoenix, AZ
 Susan Lawruk, LPN
 DelRonda Boyd, RN Tempe, AZ
 Jackie Knight, RN Hayden Lake, ID
 Phyllis Harden, RN
 Barbara J. Rodriguez, RN Eagle, ID
 Barbara S. Johnson, RN, BSN Brookfield, WI
 Bob Guastalli, RN St. Anne, IL
 Emily Sparks, RN Woolwich, NJ
 Sharon La France, RN (ret) Sun Lakes, AZ
 Francie Tyler, RN, BSN Moscow, ID
 Judith Gibson, RN, BSN Pasadena, MD
 Maggie Davis, LPN Strawn, IL
 Jill Deras, BSN Omaha, NE
 Donna Luebbert, RN Westphalia, MO

Magdalene Uhlenkott, RN, BSN Seattle, WA
Catherine Lavigne, BSN, RN Naperville, IL
Agnes E. Bayer, CPNP New York, NY
William J. Guy, Jr., RN Philadelphia, PA
Laura Duarte, RN Fairhaven, MA
Anne Fountain, RN, MA
Marilyn A. D. Yee, PharmD AZ
Carl J. Kunasek Pharmacist , Former member Arizona Legislature 1973 to 1989, Health
Committee Member 1973 - Chairman 1980 to 1986, Arizona Senate President 1987 to 1989
Mesa, AZ
Anthony Bartal, Pharmacist Columbia, MO
J. David Luckhaupt, Pharmacist OH
Annette Tipton, Pharmacist Pierre Part, LA
Jaime Rehmann, 4th year Medical Student Athens, OH
Matthew Uhlenkott, 4th year medical student Seattle, WA
Anna Kernysky, 4th year Medical Student Rockledge, PA
Rebecca M. Restivo, MBA, 4th year Medical Student Kansas City, MO
Rachel Kotora Langley, 2nd year medical student Kansas City, MO
Candace Murray, 4th year medical student Chicago, IL
Neethu Muppadyil, Medical Student Chicago, IL
David Theis, 4th year Medical Student Athens, OH
Warren K. Spellman, Chief Executive Officer, Holy Cross Hospital Taos, NM
Bishop Thomas J. Olmstead, Roman Catholic Diocese of Phoenix, AZ
David Ermine, Esq. Philadelphia, PA
Shelia Parkhill, Esq. CA
Thomas M. Lynch, Esq. Annapolis, MD
Peggy Wolock, Esq. Columbus, OH
Lisette Lange, Esq. San Antonio, TX
Edward T. Mechmann, Esq. New York, NY
Elizabeth Rockwell Brown, Esq. North Bend, WA
James S. Cole, Esq. St. Louis, MO
Brian Kruckenberg, Esq. Mesa, AZ
Stephen J. Koob, PhD Dayton, OH
Philip J. Mango, PhD New York, NY
Rev. Robert A. Connor, PhD. New York, NY
Elizabeth A. Komives, PhD San Diego, CA
Steven Smith, PhD New York, NY
Gary Somers, PhD Phoenix, AZ
Chris Alario, PhD Hermosa Beach, CA
Jocelyn Edathil, PhD Hershey, PA

Christina Schuerger, LCSW New York, NY
Peg Burson Columbus, OH
Sue Fryer Vancouver Island, Canada
Jo Ann Alicia Foley Glenside, PA
Michael Joseph Bouchard Phoenix, AZ
JoAnne Bouchard Phoenix, AZ
Cassandra McCullers North Wales, PA
Mary Peterson Phoenix, AZ
Ted Bauer Rochester, MN
Sarah Bauer Rochester, MN
Laura Ewing St. Clairsville, OH
Linda Milano Sickleville, NJ
Helene Hallowell Holmes, PA
John Hallowell Holmes, PA
Maria Dorsaneo, PA-C Philadelphia, PA
Melissa L. Schools Lowell, MA
David Burson Berne, IN
Jennifer Ellis NJ
Christine DeMuro Naperville, IL
Julie Schuerger
James McCormick Sellersville, PA
Stacey McCormick Sellersville, PA
Jenni Maas St. Paul, MN
Stephen Maas St. Paul, MN
Angela Rizzo Rockville Center, NY
Pat Lencioni Alamo, CA
Jo Rhoades-Cokonougher Greenfield, OH
Jennifer L. Siekmann Phoenix, AZ
Laurie Murdock San Francisco, CA
April Yeager Phoenix, AZ
Denny Daugherty Columbus, OH
Diane Toler Glenmoore, PA
Donna Ellingsen Lewisville, PA
Stephanie Barbara Bridgewater, NJ
Joshua Griffin Levittown, PA
Caitlin Griffin Levittown, PA
Lisamarie Beiter Omaha, NE
Mariangela Cavazos Austin, TX
Joan Beiter Lancaster, OH
Daniel Hedrick Omaha, NE
Kathleen Hedrick Omaha, NE
Joe Plasha Lansdale, PA
Laureen Plasha Lansdale, PA
Lisa M. Pollard West Pittston, PA
Josie Genovese Plymouth Meeting, PA
Madeleine Heck Phoenix, AZ
Miranda Peterson Phoenix, AZ
Erin Schanne Havertown, PA
Amy Nelson Glendale, AZ
John A. Griffin IV Levittown, PA
Teresa Praasterink Phoenix, AZ
Cindy Ortega, MC, NCC Phoenix, AZ
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Maria Elena Townsend Chandler, AZ
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Seth Kunzl Vaughn, WA
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Holly Gatling Columbia, SC
Krysta Niznick Minneapolis, MN
Kristina Garza Rancho Cucamonga, CA
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Charlene Aycock Middleton, ID
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Sheryl L. Nuxoll Cottonwood, ID
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Don DeArmond Grangeville, ID
Charlotte DeArmond Grangeville, ID
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Sandy Gazda San Antonio, TX
Scott Turner San Antonio, TX
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Jennifer Schuberth Ellicott City MD
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Ona Corkrin Catonsville MD
Holly Navotny Catonsville MD
Sue Smith Ellicott City MD
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Bridget Alario Hermosa Beach, CA
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Randy Prenger Jefferson City, MO
Donna Prenger Jefferson City, MO

Kevin Prenger Jefferson City, MO
Julie Prenger Jeffeson City, MO
Brian Prenger Jefferson City, MO
Stanley Prenger Jefferson City, MO
Rachel Prenger Jefferson City, MO
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Jason Davidson Springfield, MO
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Shirley Stubbers Cottonwood, ID
Thomas Victor Cunilio Gainesville, FL
Linda Geidl Troy, ID
Emily Rice Narberth, PA
Paul V. Hursh Mesa, AZ
Alice Kremer
Valerie Giglio Peoria, AZ

It is imperative that the government at every level allow doctors to follow their consciences and refuse to do procedures they believe to be immoral. There are far too many docs and others who will do anything for the buck. Those who won't need to be respected and allowed to practice their form of medicine.

**John F Kippley, President
NFP International**

www.NFPandmore.org

"Sex and the Marriage Covenant: A Basis for Morality" (Ignatius)

I strongly support the right of conscience for healthcare providers. I feel that it is definitely wrong to make anyone go against their moral conscience, particularly in cases where their religion or ethics dictate that certain actions on their part may directly or indirectly cause the termination of an innocent human life.

We hear much about the "Right to Choose", but there is no such right. If the claim is that there is such a right, then why cannot healthcare providers use that right in such cases where others want to deprive them of that right.

**Joseph H. Hewes
Seneca, SC**

Hi. I definitely support that health care providers and pharmacists should have the right to refuse to provide services for things that go against their beliefs. Doctors should have the right to refuse to prescribe contraceptives, to refuse to perform abortions, etc. Pharmacists should have the right to refuse to fill a prescription for contraceptives, RU 486, etc. To force these people to go against their values and morals is a violation of free speech.

Thanks for your attention to this matter!

**Rebecca Whisonant
Rock Hill, SC**

I am writing about the issue of conscience in Medicine. As a pro-life, NFP-only Family physician in Lenoir City, TN outside of Knoxville, I have enjoyed the freedom to not have to check my faith at the door of my private practice. I am a Roman Catholic fully in support of the teachings of my Church regarding birth control, sterilization, in vitro fertilization and abortion. I do not prescribe contraceptives, write Viagra or like drugs for unmarried men, and I do not refer patients for sterilization or directly refer for in vitro fertilizations.

While I do not expect any of my patients to agree with my faith, they on the other hand do not expect me to violate it any more than someone who is Jewish would be expected to be force-fed pork ribs at a luncheon. If that happened the media would be all over it. But let a doctor refuse to inseminate a lesbian, and the courts allow the radical left to pounce all over him or her for refusing to materially cooperate in something they do not wish to do.

My patients have told me that while they may not agree with me, they respect my right to conscience in these matters. There are always other medical providers to be had, some conveniently, some not. But even if I were in a more rural area, I should not be forced to provide a form of care I disagree with. This violates the very heart of a basic freedom guaranteed by our Constitution, Freedom of Religion.

From the medical/professional side of things, I alone should be able to decide what is in the realm of my personal practice, no matter what the "demands" of a patient who hits the door. Unless their life (*not* their "health" as defined by the abortion community) is in immediate danger or they collapse right before me, I should have the right of refusal according to the dictates of my conscience or medical opinion. Otherwise a patient could simply walk in, decide they want something that they read about, even though it is not appropriate for them, and I would be forced into the role of a drive-through prescription service. I did not study long years for the government to tell me how to practice medicine!

Speaking from a purely business perspective, it is afforded to restaurants and any other business "the right to refuse service to anyone". They can hang that sign and enforce it as they see fit for the good of their business. Why should doctors be any different? It is long past time to stop pandering to the far left liberal pro-abortion faction in this matter.

Abortion was made legal in this country as a private matter between a woman and her doctor. Not that I agree with that legality, but I am realistic enough to know exactly where this push to do away with conscience is coming from. If one uses the same logic, whether or *not to prescribe any* drug for *any* reason, is a *private* matter for the *doctor*, who should not even be required to refer the patient for an abortion or contraception or whatever it is they disagree with, but the doctor should simply inform the patient that they do not perform the requested service. The AMA code of ethics used to say that, I wouldn't know about their current code because I stopped giving their pro-abortion organization my money a long time ago. They don't represent the heart of medicine anymore, just the radical left.

Next thing you know you are going to be requiring doctors to write antibiotics for common colds just because "the patient wants it". Or, back to our restaurant analogy, how about let's tell Chick Fil A to serve beef burgers just because a group of people demand it? Is this a country founded on "free enterprise" or is it turning into a radical-left-only way of doing business?

Medicine is a business as well, and the employees or owners of a business ought to be able to work without having their beliefs violated. One wouldn't expect a waitress at a restaurant to have sex with a patron "just because he asked!" This issue of conscience is every bit as morally serious to those of us who do not practice medicine that way. To change our practice would be in our faith (*not* Nancy Pelosi's brand of "cafeteria Catholicism") a mortal sin and we will not do it. It amounts to asking us to "get in bed" with the devil himself. We don't expect everyone to agree with us, the freedom of belief is afforded to everyone. Free will is the inalienable right of every human. We simply want to preserve ours as well.

I do hope that you have some people on this committee with the good sense to restore the rights of practicing physicians to be free to practice medicine as they personally see fit, not the way that a far left radical minority would prefer it. My patients have been supportive of my decisions because they know I answer to a higher power before anyone. That basic right, freedom of religion, should not be interfered with, period.

Gail-Marie Walter MD

Please do all you can to protect the right of conscience for our medical professionals so that they have the right to deny services that go against their beliefs.

All life is valuable...

Thank you

Laure Thorpe

We are writing to ask that you vote this Friday, FOR the right of medical professionals to deny participating in services that go against their beliefs.

Thank you,

Ralph and Dianne Hoffmann
Charlotte, NC

I wanted to quickly share my belief that medical professionals should not be told they must provide treatment contrary to their conscience. To me, that is stealing their soul. I've had doctors ask me my religious beliefs as they relate to treatment, what's wrong with a doctor informing patients what they will and will not do?

Thanks

Alexis Castellana

We strongly urge you to uphold religious freedom and to never allow medical professionals to be coerced by a "government religion" of secularism to violate their religious beliefs.

A medical conscience clause is imperative in protecting innocent life and maintaining quality of care in the U.S. Please ensure its protection.

Thank you for your consideration,

Jean Aberle

Please support the rights of individuals to follow their beliefs and withhold services or prescriptions that would take away a human life.

Tami Kiser

I want to voice my opinion toward your vote on Friday:

I want medical professionals to have the right to deny services that go against their beliefs.

Michelle Buckman

www.MichelleBuckman.com

Fiction that rethinks Life

I would like to voice my support of allowing healthcare providers the right to decide which services they are willing to provide. I believe a lot of the issue lies around ones who are unwilling to provide abortions. And by abortions I include "birth control" pills which actually don't prevent conception, but do abort the baby once the egg has been fertilized. Thank you for allowing them to follow their conscience. And, for those who would look to obtain the pills, it is not like they don't

have other options to go to. So by removing these providers from services, you are also affecting people who aren't looking for these pills, but are happy to have the provider to go to.
Steve [Brock]

Please vote to allow medical professionals to have the freedom to deny services that go against their personal belief's.

Thank you,
Terri DeLuca
Midland, NC

Please do all you can to ensure that physicians can follow their conscience and the teachings of their church in their medical practice. According to the Roman Catholic Church, it is a grave evil to prescribe contraception and to perform abortions or to participate in euthanasia, and to do so is a mortal sin and puts our eternal salvation in jeopardy. Additionally, our patients deserve to be treated by physicians who are supportive of their own beliefs. Physicians who do not perform abortions or prescribe contraception or participate in euthanasia are not "out of the mainstream" and in fact there are several polls that show a slight majority of our population favors restrictions on abortion. It is established biological fact that life begins at conception, and not implantation. We should not drive pro-life physicians or physicians who limit their practice due to conscience and religious affiliation out of practice.

Rob Chasuk MD
Director
Family Medicine Residency Program
Baton Rouge General Medical Center

As the Council convenes for the hearing on the right of conscience for health care providers, I implore you to allow medical professionals to exercise the freedom this country was founded on. To strong arm a doctor to perform a procedure that he is morally opposed to is denying him the freedom to practice his religion. You are not taking side by voting to uphold the right of conscience. You would be doing what is right for all.

Thank you,
Kathy Schmugge

Of course members of the medical profession do have the right to deny to provide services that violate their professional and personal ethics. This is not something that anyone has the right to legislate. Please make sure that it does not happen.

There are plenty of other people who do not listen to the voice of God in providing services that go against His will. Please leave those who do listen alone.

Thank you,
Mary F. LeBlanc Creger

As the Council convenes for the hearing on the right of conscience for health care providers, I write expressing my strong opinion that medical professionals should unequivocally be granted freedom of conscience and the ability to deny services that go against their beliefs.

In a society that promotes life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness, will we not honor the liberty of the individual health care provider to pursue his own beliefs without being forced to contradict them in his actions?

Thank you for hearing my concern.

Marie Connelly
Candidate for Juris Doctorate, Notre Dame Law School

I'm writing to ask that you vote in favor of allowing doctors the right of conscience in all areas of science. This has been the basis of the Hippocratic oath for over 2000 years and serves as our protection. We take this right away and our moral foundation will begin to unravel. This is a very serious matter.

Sincerely,

Laura Howard

Sept. 07. 2008

I recently learned of legislation that is being put through that would prohibit doctors and other health care professionals from exercising a right of conscience about specific issues, mainly abortion. I am a practicing Catholic who is very pro-life. In fact, I choose my internist and, especially my OB-Gyns, with this in mind. I do NOT want to go into a doctor's office and have them push their views on me, especially when it means that they believe that I should not have more children. I know that my beliefs about abortion and especially contraception are a minority. I understand that many people don't agree with me on these issues. However, these people who don't agree seem to have the right to find doctors that support their opinions, ones that will dispense birth control, perform abortions, and agree with them on end of life issues. As a citizen of the United States of America, I believe that I have this freedom as well. I don't want my freedoms to find the doctors that support my views to be removed. I understand that you may object to this strict view of this legislation, stating that the OBs and internists that are pro-life can still work. However, I tell you that for the pro-life doctors, their belief that these procedures they are asked to perform is wrong is so strong that they will choose not to practice medicine. They would prefer to stop practicing rather than be forced to refer for abortion even though they, themselves, would not be performing the action. I ask you, is that what we want in America? With the economy the way it is currently, do we really want to force more people out of work? Do we really want to back people who have a conscience into a corner and in a sense, force them not to practice medicine, when many are very qualified and competent doctors. I WANT a right to choose a doctor that I agree with, one that will support me on my decisions, one that will give me the best medical care that I can receive. And for me, that means that they are not encouraging me to abort, or encouraging me to do other practices that I don't agree with. For me, that means that they are exercising a conscience. That is my right as a citizen and I expect you to protect it. I also believe that is their right as a professional and one that you should be protecting as well.

Thank you
Kristen Colton

When I was fellow in Maternal Fetal Medicine, residents told me that since I did not perform abortions, I should not be allowed to practice Maternal Fetal Medicine. This was coming from women MDs, who it was previously alleged faced barriers to professional advancement because of their gender. Rather than have compassion for me, they wanted to eliminate people like me.

In my residency I refused to perform abortions. While I survived, nurses had been previously fired for not doing abortions. Residents had been hounded out of the program for not performing

abortions.

I knew another doctor who was fired from her family practice residency, 3 months before she graduated, because she did not prescribe contraceptives.

One family practitioner was kicked out of UCLA genetics program for not being sympathetic to abortion.

One family practitioner was kicked out of Montana and had to relocate to Florida for his beliefs.

Three OB/GYNs had a successful practice at a Catholic Hospital. They were hounded out by sham peer review and each had to leave.

Another OB/GYN stopped prescribing contraceptives. Despite this she had a very busy practice. She was forced out of the hospital and had to leave town. Despite the unfair circumstances of her departure, The hospital demanded loan repayment for her early departure.

Despite being an excellent surgeon, and being very successful at attracting a large following of patients, one Ob/GYN was hounded out of two different locales for her beliefs.

I attended a conference at the Vatican on rights of conscience for OB/GYNs around the world. From all around the world and all across America came sad, tragic tales of persecution, discrimination, sham peer review, and maltreatment. Physicians were hounded out of their practices, their hospitals, their careers, and even their countries. These sad tales came not from communist countries, but mostly from so-called democracies.

If one should not be mistreated and discriminated against because of one religion or beliefs, then why are physicians persecuted for their beliefs.

Only about 1/2000 OB/GYNs does not prescribe contraceptives. In one area of downtown LA, near 6th and westmoreland, there seem to be more abortion providers than gasoline stations. If 1.4 million abortions occur every year in the United States, how can one say there is a shortage of providers. Many patients travel 6 hrs by car from Chicago to Granite City Illinois for abortions at the notorious "Hope" clinic. No one needs an abortion as an emergency. To say that there is a critical shortage of such providers is as dishonest as saying the sun is purple. Anyone who really wants one can get one. If abortion should be "safe", "legal" and "rare", then a shortage of such providers would be something to be hoped for, but certainly not a reality today.

For MDs who do not prescribe contraceptives, both OB/GYN and Family practice, there have been many examples in my experience or those I personally know, where they were kicked out of training programs, hospitals, medical practices, etc., for not prescribing contraceptives or doing abortions.

Many have complained about repeated ethical lapses and scandals among the medical profession. These have led to the proliferation of programs of medical ethics. The Oath of Hippocrates was a response to widespread unethical behavior among the medical profession in classical times. Certainly, ethical doctors are needed. In fact, ACOG and ABOG demand that their doctors be ethical, even while demanding that they perform or refer for abortion and contraception.

If we do not force doctors to be ethical, we should at least allow them to be ethical.

Paddy Jim Baggot MD

I was contacted by AAPLOG that there will be a meeting this Friday to discuss the physicians' right of conscience. I am attaching letters we sent from the Catholic Medical Association to ACOG and ABOG re their attempt to force ob-gyns to at refer for abortions, practice near abortionists, and even perform abortions. ABOG two months later made it a requirement that all ob-gyns being certified or recertified comply with the ethics opinions of ACOG which would have put pro-life ob-gyns out of business. I hope the President's Council on Bioethics can help these groups understand the importance of conscience, especially fro physicians making life and death decisions for patients.

Sincerely,

Kathleen M. Raviele, M.D. F.A.C.O.G.
ravielek@gmail.com
President, Catholic Medical Association

I am concerned that there appears to be an effort among physicians, nurse practitioners and especially ACOG members to force other physicians, nurses, etc. to abrogate their consciences when it comes to abortion. This is striking at the very fabric of a person's right to be in consonance with her Faith, her morals, her values. It further seems to be a concerted effort to drive Muslims, Catholics, Orthodox Jews and others of faith (or of no faith but who abhor abortion) out of medicine.

Such an effort has far-reaching consequences for patients as well as physicians. Are we now about to mandate abortion of infants with special needs, infanticide, and euthanasia? This is truly a Pandora's box and I would expect the President's Bioethics Committee, under your leadership, to come out clearly and completely in support of a person's right to follow her or his conscience.

Thank you... for standing up for the rights of individual citizens.

Therese T. Maes
San Jose, CA

We would urge you to respect the rights of medical practitioners to practice medicine in accordance with their consciences. It is extremely difficult and close to impossible for us as people of faith to find doctors who respect our religious beliefs in our care and the care of our children. The first amendment of the Constitution states that "Congress shall make no law ...prohibiting the free exercise [of religion]" This right must be preserved for all American citizens, including those in the medical professions.

Thank your for your attention to this matter.

Mrs. Elizabeth Smith
Mr. David Smith

Please do not destroy our society by forcing our Christians physicians to perform the type of medicine that is against their conscience, all humans have a right to LIFE, and LIBERTY, Some of our technologies today are not what they appear to be, some of the long term and future side effects are not known, some of the very severe emotional consequence are known: PLEASE do not pass this lack of conscience clause.

Thank you
Theresa Mitchell

I want to voice my support for medical professionals to not be forced to violate their conscience. I am tired of being belittled by medical professionals because I use natural family planning which has proven it's usefulness and effectiveness but because it isn't the norm and involves the following of conscience by trying to follow my religious beliefs is ridiculed. I want medical professionals who respect the fact that my values and morals are a part of who I am and that you cannot violate a persons conscience without also violating the person. I want my "choice" of a medical professional who will respect me and share my moral convictions when making my medical decisions.

Thank you and may God's peace and blessings be always with you.

Carolyn Susin

Sept. 06, 2008

Please let me state that ObGyn and Family Practice (Catholic) doctors are few and far between. It would be most appreciated if my family and I could have access to the services of such doctors, who share our values. I ask that you act in support of the people, my family and myself, and do not allow the persecution of Catholic doctors. Losing ones ACOG, board certification, hospital privileges, etc. because they are pro-life is unethical and unfair.

Thank you for your time,

Mrs. Valerie Burkart

I am writing to state the necessity - and, personal desire- that I have, for Catholic physicians to be present in such fields as Family Practice and OBGYN. More specifically, such physicians must be allowed to treat their patients, and conduct their practices, as their conscience requires.

The life issues (abortion, contraception, emergency contraception) are not negotiable items for Catholic men and women, and we deserve access to physicians who respect the Natural Moral Law, as much as we do. We will not compromise on these key issues, and our physicians should not be forced to do so, either.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter, and I hope that you will understand the sincerity with which it was written.

Sincerely,
Ashley McGlone

I am a recent graduate of the University of South Carolina, and one who feels strongly about the sanctity of human life. I feel that it is important for medical professionals to have the right to refuse to perform services that go against their beliefs (particularly, I feel it is important for a physician to be able to refuse to perform an abortion if it is against his/her conscience), and that they should be able to do so without forfeiting their jobs. I encourage you and the other members of the Council to support these physicians in their decisions.

Sincerely,
Sarah Nyikos